EMERSON COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

PROGRAM

EMERSON COLLEGE THEATRE

December 7, 8, 9, 1960

THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

presents

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Production Directed by
GERTRUDE BINLEY KAY

Set Designed by	*Lighting Designed by*	*Costumes by*
HARRY W. MORGAN	JOHN KOHLER	B. MATHESON

CAST

(in order of appearance)

BOY.....Gail Greene
MESSENGER.....Alexandra Russell
LEONATO.....Paul j. Austin
BEATRICE.....Myrna j. Austin
HERO.....Susan Lightbown
DON PEDRO.....Tom DeSimone
CLAUDIO.....Frank Roberts
BENEDICK.....Louis Lopez-Cepero
DON JOHN.....Bert Houle
CONRADE.....Jack Washington
BORACHIO.....Ivan Haskell
DOGBERRY.....Sidney Buffington
VERGUS.....Marty Tractenburg
SEXTON.....Richard Hanlon
URSULA.....Judie Espinola
MARGARET.....Rosemary Keefe
FRIAR FRANCIS.....Frank Musone
BALTHAZAR.....Don Marsh

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action takes place in the city of Messina.

ACT ONE—Scene One: Garden of Leonato
Scene Two: Garden

ACT TWO—Scene One: Garden
Scene Two: Street
Scene Three: Hero's apartment
Scene Four: Garden

ACT THREE—Scene One: Church
Scene Two: Prison

ACT FOUR—Scene One: Garden
Scene Two: Tomb
Scene Three: Garden

PRODUCTION STAFF

Coordinator.....Sam Beaulieu
Stage Manager.....Liz Myerberg
Assistant.....Gail Lawrence
Technical Director.....Stan Fudala
Master Painter.....Harry W. Morgan
Master Electrician.....Stu Rabinowitz
Master Carpenter.....Alan Hanson
Make up Director.....Jack Stein
Assistant.....Lana Litch
Lighting Assistant.....Jim Carrigan
Master of Furniture Props.....Len McClintock
Master of Hand Props.....Meryl Gisser
Master of Sound.....Richard Hanlon
House Manager.....Richard Stugis

All crews supplied by Drama 115.

PRODUCTION NOTES

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, the second of Shakespeare's great romantic comedies, was written in 1598-99. It has held the stage since it first appeared, chiefly, perhaps, because of those witty and reluctant lovers, Beatrice and Benedick, who seem "modern" in every generation. Like the other great Shakespearian comedies, *Much Ado* is a holiday from the cares of the world; an entertainment in which humor of several kinds is delicately mingled with both real music and the music of the verse.

The basis of the plot is hardly comic in itself: Don John's lying slander of young Hero, on the eve of her wedding to Claudio, though the story ends happily when Don John's machinations are discovered; Claudio repents, Hero forgives him, and the marriage proceeds as planned. Shakespeare took the plot most directly from a novel by Bandello, but he also knew several other versions, including Ariosto's (in *Orlando Furioso*) and Spenser's (in *The Faerie Queene*). The play is much lighter than any of its sources. The characters are treated humorously, and the intrigue is both quick and casual. Moreover Shakespeare wove into Bandello's plot two stories of his own invention, Benedick's wooing of Beatrice, which is high comedy, and Dogberry's dim-witted sleuthing, which may be described as poetic farse. In the play the adventures of the two pairs of lovers are amusingly contrasted, and the audience, taking its ease, can smile with a certain detachment at the follies of all young love.

When Shakespeare called this play *Much Ado About Nothing*, he plainly indicated that it was not to be taken too literally, as though it were a modern "slice of life". The story is romantic, and highly improbable; but that is part of the fun. The elegant manners of Leonato's houseparty—the free leisurely play of wit, the idealized, subtle code of love—are certainly remote from our experience; but Shakespeare himself presents these conventions of Renaissance society as part of the masquerade. When he writes comedy he is always in a holiday mood, always at play. Yet, when he ends an evening of laughter and music, we realize that much has been revealed about humanity and the forms its love may take.

By Francis Fergusson, *from The Introduction to* The Laurel Shakespeare.

COMING PRODUCTIONS

January 12 and 13	SOPHOMORE SHOWCASE
January 14	PETER PAN
January 23 and 24	EVENING SCHOOL PRODUCTIONS